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Sen. Laura Toy's bill to improve fire safety signed into law

LANSING – A bipartisan package aimed at improving statewide fire protection services and homeland security has been signed into law, said state Sen. Laura M. Toy, 6th District, sponsor of one of the bills in the package.

“By consolidating and streamlining these services under one roof we can better focus our efforts to protect Michigan residents,” Sen. Toy said. “We need to make sure that our state’s firefighters and fire chiefs have the support they need to do their jobs effectively.”

The bills, which became law Monday, create a new Bureau of Fire Services to coordinate all fire service functions in the state, as well as to handle emergency response planning and homeland security issues related to fire protection.

The new bureau will be headed by the state fire marshal.

“I’m particularly pleased to see the Fire Fighting Training Council and other fire safety programs come out from under the Bureau of Construction Codes and instead move under the state fire marshal,” said Redford Township Fire Chief Leslie Wedge. “I think it is important that we continue to have autonomy when it comes to fire services in the state.”

Sen. Toy’s bill transfers the authority to approve plans for fireproof structures intended to protect public documents to the new bureau.

“We are shifting responsibilities that once spanned many departments into the Bureau of Fire Services,” Sen. Toy said. “Not only will this make for a more efficient operation, but it will also give us greater accountability in terms of knowing who to look to for action if there are gaps in the fire protection system.”

Sen. Toy’s legislation becomes Public Act 205 of 2006.

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